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ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY
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SAMPLE COLLECTION TECHNIQUES
DRINKING WATER

Bacteriological Samples for Drinking Water

1. Use a sterilized sample bottle containing the appropriate preservative; these may be obtained from the laboratory.
2. If possible, use a non-mixing, non-swiveling cold water faucet that is not attached to a water softener.
3. Remove the screen or aerator from the faucet.
4. Rinse the inside and outside of the faucet with a weak bleach solution.
5. Allow the water to run for 3 to 4 minutes; reduce the flow of the water.
6. Remove the cap from the bottle, making sure not to touch the inside of the cap. Do not rinse the pill (or powder) out of the bottle. Holding the bottle near the bottom, fill it to the 100-mL mark without allowing it to overflow. Immediately replace the cap tightly on the bottle.
7. Fill out all information on the form, including Collect Date, Collect Time and Collect By.
8. Keep the sample cool until they can be delivered to the laboratory; samples must reach the laboratory within 30 hours of collection to produce valid results.

Lead and Copper Rule – Drinking Water

1. Obtain a plastic one-liter collection bottle from the laboratory. Alternatively, a clean, one quart glass or plastic bottle may be used.
2. Samples must be collected after water has been sitting in the pipes for at least 6 hours.
3. Make sure not to touch the inside of the cap or the bottle top.
4. Using a kitchen or bathroom cold water faucet, hold the open bottle below the faucet and gently turn on the tap. Fill the bottle to within ½ inch of the top and turn off the tap. Cap the bottle tightly to prevent leakage.
5. Fill out any paperwork, including Collect Date, Collect Time and Collect By.
6. Keep the sample cool until it can be returned to the laboratory.

Inorganic Parameters – Drinking Water

1. Depending upon the number and type of analyses you wish to have done, obtain a 250 mL or 1000 mL plastic bottle from the laboratory. Alternatively, use a clean one quart plastic or glass bottle.
2. Using a cold water tap, allow the water to run for 3 to 4 minutes.
3. Open the bottle, placing the cap on a clean surface, inside up. Make sure not to touch the inside of the cap or the bottle top.
4. Decrease the water flow and fill the sample bottle to within ½ inch of the top.
5. Cap the bottle tightly to prevent leakage.
6. Fill out any paperwork, including Collect Date, Collect Time and Collect By.
7. Keep the bottle cool until it can be returned to the laboratory.